

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF FLORIDA

LINDA DEROSIER SCHOONOVER,

Petitioner,

Case No. SC15-613

v.

JUDICIAL QUALIFICATIONS COMMISSION,

Respondent.

---

**APPENDIX TO OBJECTION TO PETITIONER'S MOTION FOR EXTENSION OF  
TIME TO FILE REPLY TO SPECIAL COUNSEL'S RESPONSE TO JUDGE LINDA D.  
SCHOONOVER'S PETITION FOR WRIT OF QUO WARRANTO AND PETITION FOR  
RELIEF PURSUANT TO THE ALL WRITS PROVISION OF THE FLORIDA  
CONSTITUTION AND RULE 21 OF THE FLORIDA JUDICIAL QUALIFICATIONS  
COMMISSION**

---

Henry M. Cox, III  
Florida Bar No. 0155193  
E-Mail: [hmc@bedellfirm.com](mailto:hmc@bedellfirm.com)  
Oliver David Barksdale  
Florida Bar No. 0957331  
E-Mail: [odb@bedellfirm.com](mailto:odb@bedellfirm.com)  
Ashley W. Greene  
Florida Bar No. 0010973  
E-Mail: [awg@bedellfirm.com](mailto:awg@bedellfirm.com)  
BEDELL, DITTMAR, DeVAULT,  
PILLANS & COXE, P.A.  
The Bedell Building  
101 East Adams Street  
Jacksonville, Florida 32202  
Telephone: (904)353-0211  
Facsimile: (904)353-9307

Attorneys for Respondent,  
Judicial Qualifications Commission

RECEIVED, 05/11/2015 02:48:35 PM, Clerk, Supreme Court

## INDEX

### IDENTIFIER

### DOCUMENT

Exhibit A

Letter to Judge Schoonover from The Honorable John H. Harris, Chief Judge of the Eighteenth Circuit, dated May 8, 2015

### CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a true and correct copy of the foregoing has been furnished by electronic mail to Scott G. Millard, attorney for The Honorable Linda D. Schoonover, [smillard@cohenbattisti.com](mailto:smillard@cohenbattisti.com); [erinlawrence@cohenbattisti.com](mailto:erinlawrence@cohenbattisti.com), Judge Linda D. Schoonover, [linda.schoonover@flcourts18.org](mailto:linda.schoonover@flcourts18.org), The Honorable Robert Morris, Florida Judicial Qualifications Commission Hearing Panel Chair, [morrisr@flcourts.org](mailto:morrisr@flcourts.org), Michael Schneider, General Counsel to the Judicial Qualifications Commission, [mschneider@floridajqc.com](mailto:mschneider@floridajqc.com), and Lauri Waldman Ross, Counsel to the Hearing Panel of the Florida Judicial Qualifications Commission, [rossgirtten@laurilaw.com](mailto:rossgirtten@laurilaw.com), this 11th day of May, 2015.

/s/ Henry M. Coxe, III

Attorney

# Exhibit A



**STATE OF FLORIDA**  
*Counties of Brevard and Seminole*  
*Circuit Court Eighteenth Judicial Circuit*

---

*John M. Harris*  
Chief Judge

*Jennifer Pastor*  
Judicial Assistant

*The Moore Justice Center*  
2825 Judge Fran Jamieson Way  
Viera, Florida 32940-8006  
(321) 617-7287 (Tel)  
(321) 617-7293 (Fax)

May 8, 2015

Judge Linda Schoonover  
190 Bush Blvd.  
Sanford, FL 32773-6076

Dear Judge Schoonover,

This is a letter I had really hoped not to have to write, but I have been left with no other option at this point. As Chief Judge of the Eighteenth Circuit I owe certain responsibilities to the citizens of Seminole County as well as to your colleagues on the bench to address this current situation.

As you know, today marks the end of the fourth consecutive week that you have failed, for whatever reason, to come to work. The other judges in Seminole County, in addition to managing their own dockets, have been covering yours as well. This certainly includes Judge Stacy, brand new to the bench, who has been forced to absorb a great deal of your workload. Those cases that have not been handled by other judges have had to be rescheduled, imposing great burden on the system as well as the litigants. Remarkably, you have not troubled yourself to check on the status of any of the very serious cases assigned to you nor to even extend the courtesy of thanking those judges who are doing your work every day. As disappointing as I find your continued indifference to your duties and your colleagues, that is not why I am writing.

As Chief Judge, I am the administrative officer of the courts in this circuit and I am charged with the administrative supervision of all the judges in the 18<sup>th</sup> Circuit. As you should be aware, the indefinite and unsupported leave of absence that you have placed yourself on is creating a continuing burden on the efficient administration of justice in Seminole County, and I simply cannot allow it to continue in this manner any longer.

A couple of weeks ago, I explained to you the difficulty of arranging coverage for your docket on a week-by-week basis. I also told you that the other judges in Seminole County are growing increasingly frustrated with your inability or unwillingness to provide any information as to the reasons for your absence or its anticipated duration. I instructed you then to, at a minimum, advise me every Thursday if you would be out the following week. That was followed by one cryptic text message from you on April 30<sup>th</sup> indicating no change/return date

unknown, and no response whatsoever this week. That is simply not acceptable and not what I required of you.

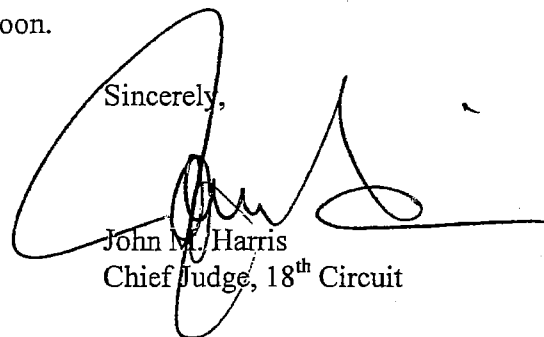
Irrespective of whatever you have going on with the JQC, I am at this time instructing you to personally update me at least twice a week as to the status of your absence and expected return date. I expect this information to come directly from you, not your attorney, and to be emailed to me each Monday and Thursday morning, beginning May 14, 2015, and continuing until you return full-time to your duties. Any supporting medical documentation you may choose to provide would certainly be helpful as I make the necessary plans to manage your docket. I would remind you of Rule 2.215(b)(11) of the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration, which provides that *"the failure of any judge to comply with an order or directive of the Chief Judge shall be considered neglect of duty and may be reported...to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court."* I will not neglect my duties by failing to report the neglect of yours.

Frankly Judge Schoonover, if you truly have a medical condition serious enough that you will be out several more weeks, the hardworking and conscientious judges of Seminole County will continue to do whatever is needed to manage your caseload. But it is very difficult to understand how a sudden and apparently undiagnosed condition renders you completely unable to work in any capacity, especially considering its coincidental timing with pending JQC discovery issues. As you are well aware, there are always orders that can be signed, phone calls that can be returned, rulings that can be entered, all of which could be done on your schedule, at your pace, and without having to sit in court. In fact, some of this work could be brought to you, if that was truly necessary. At least that minimal level of effort would relieve some of the burden your absence has created on others and would be an indication that the perceived apathy and indifference to your judicial responsibilities may be inaccurate.

In conclusion, I would urge you to do as much of your work as possible, would require you to provide bi-weekly updates as set forth above, and suggest that you govern yourself with the understanding that I will do whatever necessary to assure the prompt and efficient administration of justice in Seminole County.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John M. Harris', written over a large, loopy flourish that extends to the left and right.

John M. Harris  
Chief Judge, 18<sup>th</sup> Circuit

JMH: jp

cc: John Galluzzo, Administrative Judge Seminole County  
Donna McIntosh, Administrative Judge, Juvenile Division